

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Original): A hair inserter for inserting a hair bundle into a hair holder comprising a flat tube made of a sheet in such a design that a hair bundle can be inserted from an opening at one end thereof toward an opening at the other end thereof,

which comprises a long main body having, at one end portion thereof, a hair catching part capable of catching a hair bundle and is configured to be smoothly inserted with a hair bundle caught on the hair catching part thereof into the tube from the opening at one end toward the opening at the other end.

Claim 2 (Original): The hair inserter according to claim 1, which further comprises a space-forming member so that the hair inserter with a hair bundle caught on the hair catching part thereof may smoothly be inserted into the tube from the opening at one end thereof toward the opening at the other end thereof.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to claim 1-~~or~~2, which is stiffer than the hair holder.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to claim 2-~~or~~3, wherein the space-forming member is a sliding member thicker and wider than the hair catching part, the sliding member being provided near the hair catching part, slidable in the longitudinal direction of the hair inserter, and configured to fix a hair bundle caught on the hair catching part between the hair catching part and itself.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to claim 2-~~or~~3, wherein the space-forming member is a sloping portion integral with the main body and having a thickness increased gradually in the direction from the one end to the other end of the main body.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 5, claim 1,~~ wherein the hair catching part has a structure designed to spread a hair bundle caught thereon in the width direction of the hair inserter.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to claim 2-~~or~~3, wherein the long main body is a substantially bar-like member of which the hair catching part is a hook, and the space-forming member is a closing member capable of closing the opening of the hook.

Claim 8 (Original): The hair inserter according to claim 7, wherein the closing member is a combing member having comb teeth on one end thereof, the combing member being provided slidably in the longitudinal direction of the main body, the comb teeth pointing to the hook, and the combing member being configured to fix a hair bundle caught on the hook between the hook and the comb teeth.

Claim 9 (Original): The hair inserter according to claim 8, wherein the combing member is provided on both sides of the main body.

Claim 10 (Original): The hair inserter according to claim 7, wherein the closing member is movable with respect to the hook.

Claim 11 (Original): The hair inserter according to claim 10, wherein the hook and the closing member are shaped like a pair of stag beetle's horns.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to ~~any one of claims 7 to 11, claim 7~~, wherein the closing member is always urged to the hook by a resilient member.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to ~~any one of claims 7 to 12, claim 7~~, wherein the main body has an anti-return portion on both long side edges ~~in the thickness direction~~, the anti-return portion being designed to prevent the main body from returning in the direction opposite to the direction of insertion after the main body having a hair bundle caught thereon enters the hair holder.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to ~~any one of claims 10 to 13, claim 10~~, wherein the closing member is adapted to open the opening of the hook by an outer force applied to the closing member and to close the opening of the hook by resilient force on release of the outer force.

Claim 15 (Original): The hair inserter according to claim 1, which has an anti-return portion designed to prevent the hair inserter from returning in the direction opposite to the direction of insertion after the main body having a hair bundle caught thereon enters the hair holder.

Claim 16 (Original): The hair inserter according to claim 15, wherein the anti-return portion is made of a part of the hair inserter.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to ~~claim 15 or 16~~, of which the maximum outer circumference is 0.7 to 1.0 times the inner circumference of a cross-section of the hair holder.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to ~~any one of claims 15 to 17, claim 15~~, wherein the hair catching part is designed such that a hair bundle is passed therethrough and fixed therein.

Claim 19 (Original): The hair inserter according to claim 18, wherein the hair inserter comprises a plate-like member,

the hair catching part is a waving slit extending in the longitudinal direction of the plate-like member, and

the anti-return portion is made of a part of the plate-like member, the part being near the other end of the plate-like member, and designed to catch the edge of the opening at the other end of the hair holder thereby to prevent possible movement of the plate-like member in the direction opposite to the direction of insertion after the other end of the plate-like member emerges from the other end of the hair holder.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to claim 18, wherein the hair inserter comprises a plate-like member,

the hair catching part is a plurality of straight slits formed in parallel to the longitudinal direction of the plate-like member, and

the anti-return portion is made of a part of the plate-like member, the part being near the other end of the plate-like member, and designed to catch the edge of the opening at the other end of the hair holder thereby to prevent possible movement of the plate-like member in the direction opposite to the direction of insertion after the other end of the plate-like member emerges from the other end of the hair holder.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to ~~any one of claims 16 to 18, claim 16~~, wherein the hair inserter comprises a plate-like member, and the anti-return portion is a range of protrusions provided on each long side edge of the plate-like member.

Claim 22 (Original): The hair inserter according to claim 21, wherein the hair inserter comprises a plate-like member, and the hair catching part has comb teeth provided on the inner side thereof, the comb teeth pointing to the other end of the plate-like member.

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to claim 2-~~or 3~~, wherein the main body is a substantially bar-like member of which the hair catching part is a hook, and

the space-forming member is a sliding member provided slidably in the longitudinal direction of the main body and configured to enclose the hook in one end portion thereof and to fix a hair bundle caught on the hook between the hook and itself.

Claim 24 (Original): The hair inserter according to claim 23, wherein the sliding member is a tube in which the main body is insertable.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to claim 23-~~or~~-24, of which the maximum outer circumference is 0.7 to 1.0 times the inner circumference of a cross-section of the hair holder.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to ~~any one of claims 23 to 25, claim 23~~, wherein the sliding member is always urged to the hook by a resilient member.

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to ~~any one of claims 23 to 26, claim 23~~, wherein the main body extends through the sliding member.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to claim 26-~~or~~-27, wherein the main body has a hollow cylindrical portion between the hook and the other end thereof, in which portion the cylindrical sliding member is insertable, the part of the main body between the cylindrical portion and the other end comprising a columnar portion nearer to the cylindrical portion and a portion nearer to the other end, the columnar portion having the same outer diameter as the cylindrical portion, and the portion nearer to the other end being tapered toward the other end, and the sliding member being inserted into the cylindrical portion.

Claim 29 (Original): A hairdressing tool comprising:
a hair holder having a flat tube made of a sheet in such a design that a hair bundle can be inserted from an opening at one end thereof toward an opening at the other end thereof and a hair inserter for inserting a hair bundle into the hair holder from the opening at one end thereof to the opening at the other end thereof,

the hair holder being previously set so as to keep itself in a prescribed rolled up state,
and

the hair inserter being capable of unrolling the hair holder into a substantially strengthened state as it proceeds inside the tube from the opening at one end to the opening at the other end of the tube.

Claim 30 (Original): The hairdressing tool according to claim 29, wherein the hair inserter has a Taber stiffness of 15 mN·m or higher in the longitudinal direction thereof.

Claim 31 (Currently Amended): The hair inserter according to ~~any one of claims 4 to 28, claim 4,~~ which is stiffer than the hair holder.

Claim 32 (Original): A method of permanent waving comprising inserting a hair bundle into a hair holder by using the hair inserter according to claim 1, rolling up the hair holder having the hair bundle held therein, and applying a permanent waving preparation to the hair holder or feeding a permanent waving preparation into the inside of the hair holder from an opening of the hair holder.